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Lord Byron's Mazeppa.

Mazeppa, a Poem.—By Lord Byron.—Published by John Murray, Albemarle Street—London, July 1819—8vo. pp. 69—Price Six Shillings.

(Re-published complete in this Journal.)

The difficulty of procuring the New and Popular Publications of Europe, is complained of sufficiently at the Presidency, from the small number of them usually sent out, the great price at which they are published in England, and the still more extravagant rate at which alone they are procurable here. To Gentlemen in the interior of India, all these obstacles must be multiplied in a two-fold degree; and indeed, the transmission of Books to their respective stations is of itself sufficient to operate as an insupportable tax on their literary enjoyments.

These considerations have already frequently induced us to make this Journal a medium of communicating to them such whole Works as could be comprised within the compass of one of its Numbers, in an unbroken form; which, judging from our own feelings, we naturally conceive to be more acceptable to them, than broken portions in the shape of a cursory Review.

In the present instance, we put into their possession, the contents of a Book extended to about 70 pages, in the original, and published at Six Shillings in England, for which as many Rupees may fairly and honestly be demanded here; and as we have professedly devoted two of our Numbers in the Week to Literary subjects, the practice of so occupying them with the most popular Productions of the Day, that come within a short compass, and with the best Reviews of others that cannot be given at length, will, we trust, be well received.

As the whole Poem of *Mazeppa* is now placed before the Reader, it will be unnecessary to say any thing of our opinion of its merits, since each individual may, on the same grounds, form his own. We cannot avoid simply remarking, however, that as a production of Lord Byron it falls, in our estimation, far below the standard, to which his superior genius had deservedly attained in public estimation: and that in publishing it complete, we have been more influenced by a desire to meet the public wish, and gratify the general (and we think laudable) feeling of anxiety to possess any production from so celebrated a pen, than from our own admiration of its superior excellence.

ADVERTISEMENT.

"Celui qui remplissait alors cette place, était un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa, né dans le palatinat de Padolie; il avait été élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme d'un gentilhomme Polonais, ayant été découverte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y retourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fatigue et de faim. Quelque paysan le secourut; il resta long-temps parmi eux, et se signala dans plusieurs courses contre les tartares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna une grande considération parmi les Cosaques: sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour, obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine."—*Voltaire, Histoire de Charles XII.* p. 198.

"Le roi fuyant et poursuivi eut son cheval tué sous lui; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et perdant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi on remit deux fois à cheval, dans la suite, ce conquérant, qui n'avait pu y monter pendant la bataille."—*Voltaire, Hist. de Charles, XII.* p. 216.

"Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quelques cavaliers. Le carrosse, où il était, rompit dans la marche; on le remit à cheval. Pour comble de disgrâce, il s'égarait pendant la nuit dans un bois; là, son courage ne pouvant plus suppléer à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de sa blessure devenues plus insupportable par la fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude, il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre, en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par les vainqueurs qui le cherchaient de tous côtés."—*Voltaire, Hist. de Charles, XII.* p. 218.

I.

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede,
Around a slaughter'd army lay,
No more to combat and bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,
And Moscow's walls were safe again,
Until a day more dark and drear,
And a more memorable year,
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one—a thunderbolt to all.

II.

Such was the hazard of the die;
The wounded Charles was taught to fly
By day and night through field and flood;
Stain'd with his own and subjects' blood;
For thousands, fell that fight to aid;
And not a voice was heard to upbraid
Ambition in his humbled hour,
When truth had nought to dread from power.
His horse was slain, and Gieta gave
His own—and died the Russian's slave.
This too sinks after many a league
Of well sustain'd, but vain fatigue;
And in the depth of forests, darkling
The watch-fires in the distance sparkling—
The beacons of surrounding foes—
A king must lay his limbs at length.
Are these the laurels and repose
For which the nations strain their strength?
They laid him by a savage tree,
In out-worn nature's agony;
His wounds were stiff—his limbs were stark—
The heavy hour was chill and dark;
The fever in his blood forbade
A transient slumber's fitful aid:
And thus it was; but yet through all,
Kinglike the monarch bore his fall,
And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will;
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay.

III.

A band of chiefs!—alas! how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinn'd it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous: upon the clay
Each sat him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed,
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade—
Himself as rough, and scarce less old;
The Ukraine's hetman, calm and bold;
But first, outspent with this long course,
The Cossack prince robb'd down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane,
And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein;
And joy'd to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews;
But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too;
What'er was to be done, would do.

Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb,
 All Tartar-like he carried him;
 Obey'd his voice, and came at call,
 And knew him in the midst of all:
 Though thousands were around,—and Night,
 Without a star, pursued her flight,—
 That steed from sunset until dawn
 His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak;
 And laid his lance beneath his oak,
 Felt if his arms in order good
 The long day's march had well withstood—
 If still the powder fill'd the pan,
 And flints unloosen'd kept their lock—
 His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
 And whether they had chafed his belt—
 And next the venerable man,
 From out his haversack and can,
 Prepared and spread his slender stock;
 And to the monarch and his men
 The whole or portion offer'd then
 With far less of inquietude
 Than courtiers at a banquet would.
 And Charles of this his slender share
 With smiles partook a moment there,
 To force of cheer a greater show,
 And seem above both wounds and woe;—
 And then he said—"Of all our band,
 Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
 In skirmish, march, or forage, none
 Can less have said or more have done
 Than thee! Mazeppa! On the earth
 So fit a pair had never birth,
 Since Alexander's days till now,
 As thy Bucephalus and thou:
 All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
 For pricking on o'er flood and field."
 Mazeppa answer'd—"I'll betide
 The school wherein I learn'd to ride!"
 Quoth Charles—"Old Hetman, wherefore so,
 Since thou hast learn'd the art so well?"
 Mazeppa said—"Twere long to tell;
 And we have many a league to go
 With every now and then a blow,
 And ten to one at least the foe,
 Before our steeds may graze at ease
 Beyond the swift Borysthenes:
 And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,
 And I will be the sentinel
 Of this your troop."—"But I request,"
 Said Sweden's monarch, "thou wilt tell
 This tale of thine, and I may reap,
 Perchance, from this the boon of sleep,
 For at this moment from my eyes
 The hope of present slumber flies."

"Well, sire, with such a hope, I'll track
 My seventy years of memory back:
 I think 'twas in my twentieth spring,—
 Ay, 'twas,—when Casimir was king—
 John Casimir,—I was his page
 Six summers in my earlier age:
 A learned monarch, faithful was he,
 And most unlike your majesty:
 He made no wars, and did not gain
 New realms to lose them back again:
 And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)
 He reign'd in most unseemly quiet;
 Not that he had no cares to vex,
 He loved the muses and the sex;
 And sometimes these so froward are,
 They made him wish himself at war;
 But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
 Another mistress, or new book:
 And then he gave prodigious fêtes—
 All Warsaw gather'd round his gates
 To gaze upon his splendid court,
 And dames, and chiefs, of princely port;
 He was the Polish Solomon,
 So sung his poets, all but one,
 Who, being unpension'd made a satire;
 And boasted that he could not flatter.
 It was a court of jousts and mimes,
 Where every courtier tried at rhymes!
 Even I for once produced some verses,
 And sign'd my odes Despairing Thirsis.

There was a certain Palatine,
 A count of far and high descent,
 Rich as a salt or silver mine;*
 And he was proud, ye may divine,
 As if from heaven he had been sent:
 He had such wealth in blood and ore
 As few could match beneath the throne;
 And he would gaze upon his store,
 And o'er his pedigree would pore,
 Until by some confusion led,
 Which almost look'd like want of head,
 He thought their merits were his own.
 His wife was not of his opinion—
 His junior she by thirty years—
 Grew daily tired of his dominion;
 And, after wishes, hopes, and fears,
 To virtue a few farewell tears,
 A restless dream or two, some glances
 At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances;
 Awaited but the usual chances,
 Those happy accidents which render
 The coldest dames so very tender
 To deck her Count with titles given,
 'Tis said, as passports into heaven;
 But, strange to say, they rarely boast
 Of these who have deserved them most.

V.

I was a goodly stripling then;
 At seventy years I so may say,
 That there were few, or boys or men,
 Who, in my dawning time of day,
 Of vassal or of knight's degree,
 Could vie in vanities with me?
 For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
 A port not like to this ye see,
 But smooth, as all is rugged now;
 For time, and care, and war, have plough'd
 My very soul from out my brow;
 And thus I should be disavow'd
 By all my kind and kin, could they
 Compare my day and yesterday;
 This change was wrought, too, long ere age
 Had ta'en my features for his page:
 With years, ye know, have not declined
 My strength, my courage, or my mind,
 Or at this hour I should not be
 Telling old tales beneath a tree,
 With starless skies my canopy,
 But let me on: Theresa's form—
 Methinks it glides before me now,
 Between me and yon chestnut's bough;
 The memory is so quick and warm:
 And yet I find no words to tell
 The shape of her I loved so well;
 She had the Asiatic eye,
 Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
 Hath mingled with our Polish blood,
 Dark as above us is the sky;
 But through it stole a tender light,
 Like the first moonrise at midnight;
 Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
 Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;
 All love, half languor, and half fire,
 Like saints that at the stake expire,
 And lift their raptured looks on high,
 As though it were a joy to die,
 A brow like a midsummer lake,
 Transparent with the sun therein,
 When waves no murmur dare to make;
 And heaven beholds her face within.
 A cheek and lip—but why proceed?
 I loved her then—I love her still!
 And such as I am, love indeed
 In fierce extremes—in good and ill.
 But still we love even in our rage,
 And haunted to our very age,
 With the vain shadow of the past,
 As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI.

We met—we gazed—I saw, and sigh'd;
 She did not speak, and yet replied;
 There are ten thousand tones and signs
 We hear and see, but none defines—

* This comparison of a "salt mine," may perhaps be permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country consists greatly in the salt mines.

Involuntary sparks of thought,
Which strike from out the heart o'erwrought,
And form a strange intelligence,
Alike mysterious and intense,
Which link the burning chain that binds,
Without their will, young hearts and minds;
Conveying, as the electric wire,
We know not how, the absorbing fire.—
I saw, and sigh'd—in silence wept,
And still reluctant distance kept,
Until I was made known to her,
And we might then and there confer
Without suspicion—then, even then.

I long'd, and was resolved to speak;
But on my lips they died again.
The accents tremulous and weak,
Until one hour.—There is a game,
A frivolous and foolish play,
Wherewith we while away the day;
It is—I have forgot the name—
And we to this, it seems, were set,
By some strange chance, which I forget;
I reck'd not if I won or lost.

It was enough for me to be
So near to hear, and oh! to see
The being whom I loved the most.—
I watch'd her as a sentinel,
(May ours this dark night watch as well!)
Until I saw, and thus it was,
That she was pensive, nor perceived
Her occupation, nor was grieved
Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
Play'd on for hours as if her will
Yet bound her to the place, though not
That hers might be the winning lot.
Then through my brain the thought did pass
Even as a flash of lightning there,
That there was something in her air
Which would not doom me to despair;
And on the thought my words broke forth,
All incoherent as they were—
Their eloquence was little worth,
But yet she listen'd—'tis enough—
Who listens once will listen twice;
Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,
And one refusal no rebuff.

VII.

I loved, and was beloved again—
They tell me, Sire, you never knew
Those gentle frailties; if 'tis true,
I shorten all my joy or pain;
To you 'twould seem absurd as vain;
But all men are not born to reign,
Or o'er their passions, or as you
Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
I am—or rather was—a prince,
A chief of thousands, and could lead
Them on where each would foremost bleed;
But could not o'er myself evince
The like control—But to resume;
I loved, and was beloved again;
In sooth, it is a happy doom,
But yet where happiest ends in pain.—
We met in secret, and the hour
Which led me to that lady's bower
Was fiery Expectation's dower.
My days and nights were nothing—all
Except that hour, which doth recal
In the long lapse from youth to age
No other like itself—I'd give
The Ukraine back again to live
It o'er once more—and be a page,
The happy page, who was the lord
Of one soft heart, and his own sword.
And had no other gem nor wealth
Save nature's gift of youth and health.—
We met in secret—doubly sweet,
Some say, they find it so to meet;
I know not that—I would have given
My life but to have call'd her mine
In the full view of earth and heaven;
For I did oft and long repine
That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII.

For lovers there are many eyes,
And such there were on us;—the devil
On such occasions should be civil—

The devil!—I'm loth to do him wrong,
It might be some untoward saint,
Who would not be at rest too long,
But to his pious bile gave vent—
But one fair night, some lurking spies
Surprised and seized us both.
The Count was something more than wroth—
I was unarm'd; but if in steel,
All cap-a-pie from head to heel,
What 'gainst their numbers could I do!—
'Twas near his castle, far away
From city or from succour near,
And almost on the break of day;
I did not think to see another,
My moments seem'd reduced to few;
And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
And, it may be, a saint or two,
As I resign'd me to my fate,
They led me to the castle gate;
Theresa's doom I never knew,
Our lot was henceforth separate.—
An angry man, ye may opine,
Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
And he had reason good to be,
But he was most enraged lest such
An accident should chance to touch
Upon his future pedigree;
Nor less amazed, that such a blot
His noble 'satcheon should have got,
While he was highest of his line;
Because unto himself he seem'd
The first of men, nor less he deem'd
In others' eyes, and most in mine.
'S death! with a page—perchance a king
Had reconciled him to the thing;
But with a stripling of a page—
I felt—but cannot paint his rage.

IX.

'Bring forth the horse!—the horse was brought;
In truth, he was a noble steed,
A Tartar of the Ukraine breed,
Who look'd as though the speed of thought
Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
With spur and bridle undefiled—
'Twas but a day he had been caught;
And snorting, with erected mane,
And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
In the full foam of wrath and dread
To me the desert-born was led:
They bound me on, that menial thong;
Then loosed him with a sudden lash—
Away!—Away!—and on we dash!—
Torrents less rapid and less rash.

X.

Away!—Away!—My breath was gone—
I saw not where he hurried on;
'Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
And on he foam'd—away!—away!—
The last of human sounds which rose,
As I was darted from my foes,
Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
Which on the wind came roaring after
A moment from that rabble rout:
With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,
And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane
Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
And, writhing half my form about,
How'd back my curse; but 'midst the tread,
The thunder of my courser's speed,
Perchance they did not hear nor heed:
It vexes me—for I would fain
Have paid their insult back again.
I paid it well in after days:
There is not of that castle gate,
Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
Nor of its fields a blade of grass.
Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;
And many a time ye there might pass,
Nor dream that e'er that fortress was:
I saw its turrets in a blaze,
Their crackling battlements all cleft,
And the hot lead pour down like rain
From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,
Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof,

They little thought that day of pain,
When launch'd, as on the lightning's flash,
They bade me to destruction dash,
That one day I should come again,
With twice five thousand horse, to thank
The Count for his uncourteous ride.
They play'd me then a bitter prank,
When, with the wild horse for my guide,
They bound me to his foaming flank :
At length I play'd them one as frank—
For time at least sets all things even—
And if we do but watch the hour,
There never yet was human power
Which could evade, if unforgiven,
The patient search and vigil long
Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI.

Away, away, my steed and I,
Upon the pinions of the wind,
All human dwellings left behind ;
We sped like meteors through the sky,
When with its crackling sound the night
Is chequer'd with the northern light :
Town—village—none were on our track,
But a wild plain of far extent,
And bounded by a forest black ;
And save the scarce seen battlement
On distant height of some strong hold,
Against the Tartars built of old,
No trace of man. The year before
A Turkish army had march'd o'er ;
And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
The verdure flies the bloody sod :—
The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
And a low breeze crept moaning by—
I could have answer'd with a sigh—
But fast we fled, away, away—
And I could neither sigh nor pray ;
And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
Upon the courser's bristling mane ;
But, snorting still with rage and fear,
He flew upon his far career :
At times I almost thought, indeed,
He must have slacken'd in his speed ;
But no—my bound and slender frame
Was nothing to his angry might,
And merely like a spur became :
Each motion which I made to free
My swollen limbs from their agony
Increased his fury and affright :
I tried my voice,—'twas faint and low ;
But yet he answered as from a blow ;
And, starting to each accent, sprang
As from a sudden trumpet's clang :
Meantime my cords were wet with gore,
Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er ;
And in my tongue the thirst became
A something fierier far than flame.

XII.

We near'd the wild wood—'twas so wide,
I saw no bounds on either side ;
'Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
That bent not to the roughest breeze
Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
And strips the forest in its haste,—
But these were few, and far between
Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
Ere strawn by those autumnal eves
That nip the forest's foliage dead,
Discolour'd with a lifeless red,
Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore
Upon the slain when battle's o'er,
And some long winter's night hath shed
Its frost o'er every tombless head,
So cold and stark the raven's beak
May peck unpierced each frozen cheek :
'Twas a wild waste of underwood,
And here and there a chestnut stood,
The strong oak, and the hardy pine ;
But far apart—and well it were,
Or else a different lot were mine—
The boughs gave way, and did not tear
My limbs ; and I found strength to bear
My wounds, already scarr'd with cold—
My bones forbade to loose my hold,

We rustled through the leaves like wind,
Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind ;
By night I heard them on the track,
Their troop came hard upon our back,
With their long gallop, which can tire
The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire,
Where'er we flew they follow'd on,
Nor left us with the morning sun ;
Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
At day-break winding through the wood,
And through the night had heard their feet
Their stealing rustling step repeat.
Oh ! how I wish'd for spear or sword,
At least to die amidst the horde,
And perish—if it must be so—
At bay, destroying many a foe.
When first my courser's race begun,
I wish'd the goal already won ;
But now I doubted strength and speed,
Vain doubt ! his swift and savage breed
Had nerved him like the mountain-roe ;
Nor faster falls the blinding snow
Which whelms the peasant near the door
Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,
Than through the forest-paths he past—
Untired, untamed, and worse than wild ;
All furious as a favour'd child
Balk'd of its wish ; or fiercer still—
A woman piqued—who has her will.
The wood was past ; 'twas more than noon,
But chill the air, although in June ;
Or it might be my veins ran cold—
Prolong'd endurance tames the bold ;
And I was then not what I seem,
But headlong as a wintry stream,
And wore my feelings out before
I well could count their causes o'er :
And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
The tortures which beset my path,
Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
Thus bound in nature's nakedness ;
Sprung from a race whose rising blood
When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,
And trodden hard upon, is like
The rattle snake's, in act to strike,
What marvel if this worn-out trunk
Beneath its woes a moment sunk ?
The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,
I seem'd to sink upon the ground ;
But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,
And throbb'd awhile, then beat no more ;
The skies spun like a mighty wheel ;
I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
Which saw no farther : he who dies
Can die no more than then I died,
O'er-tortured by that ghastly ride,
I felt the blackness come and go,
And strove to wake ; but could not make
My senses climb up from below :
I felt as on a plank at sea,
When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
At the same time upheave and whelm,
And hurl thee towards a desert realm,
My undulating life was as
The fancied lights that flitting pass
Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
Fever begins upon the brain ;
But soon it pass'd, with little pain,
But a confusion worse than such :
I own that I should deem it much,
Dying, to feel the same again ;
And yet I do suppose we must
Feel far more ere we turn to dust :
No matter ; I have bared my brow
Full in Death's face—before—and now.

XIV.

My thoughts came back ; where was I ? Cold,
And numb, and giddy : pulse by pulse
Life reassumed its lingering hold,
And throb by throb ; till grown a pang
Which for a moment would convulse,
My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill ;
My ear with uncouth noises rang,

My heart began once more to thrill;
 My sight return'd, though dim; alas!
 And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.
 Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
 There was a gleam too of the sky,
 Studded with stars;—it is no dream;
 The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
 The bright broad river's gushing tide
 Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
 And we are half-way, struggling o'er
 To yon unknown and silent shore.
 The waters broke my hollow trance,
 And with a temporary strength
 My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.
 My courser's broad breast proudly braves,
 And dashes off the ascending waves
 And onward we advance!
 We reach the slippery shore at length,
 A haven I but little prized,
 For all behind was dark and drear,
 And all before was night and fear.
 How many hours of night or day
 In those suspended pangs I lay,
 I could not tell; I scarcely knew
 If this were human breath I drew.

XV.

With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
 And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
 The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
 Up the repelling bank.
 We gain the top: a boundless plain
 Spreads through the shadow of the night,
 And onward, onward, onward, seems
 Like precipices in our dreams,
 To stretch beyond the sight;
 And here and there a speck of white,
 Or scatter'd spot of dusky green,
 In masses broke into the light,
 As rose the moon upon my right.
 But nought distinctly seen
 In the dim waste, would indicate
 The omen of a cottage gate;
 No twinkling taper from afar
 Stood like an hospitable star;
 Not even an ignis-fatuus rose
 To make him merry with my woes:
 That very cheat had cheer'd me then!
 Although detected, welcome still,
 Reminding me, through every ill,
 Of the abodes of men.

XVI.

Onward we went—but slack and slow;
 His savage force at length o'erspent,
 The drooping courser, faint and low,
 All feebly foaming went.
 A sickly infant had had power
 To guide him forward in that hour;
 But useless all to me.
 His new-born tameness nought avail'd,
 My limbs were bound; my force had fail'd,
 Perchance, had they been free.
 With feeble effort still I tried
 To rend the bonds so starkly tied—
 But still it was in vain;
 My limbs were only wrung the more,
 And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
 Which but prolong'd their pain:
 The dizzy race seem'd almost done,
 Although no goal was nearly won:
 Some streaks announced the coming sun—
 How slow, alas! he came!
 Methought that mist of dawning gray
 Would never dapple into day;
 How heavily it roll'd away—
 Before the eastern flame
 Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
 And call'd the radiance from their cars,
 And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
 With lofty lustre, all his own.

XVII.

Up rose the sun; the mists were curl'd
 Back from the solitary world
 Which lay around—behind—before;
 What boot'd it to traverse o'er

Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute;
 Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
 Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
 No sign of travel—none of toil;
 The very air was mute;
 And not an insect's shrill small horn,
 Nor matie bird's new voice was borne
 From herb nor thicket. Many a wretch,
 Panting as if his heart would burst,
 The weary brute still stagger'd on;
 And still we were—or seem'd—alone;
 At length, while reeling on our way,
 Methought I heard a courser neigh,
 From out yon tuft of blackening firs.
 Is it the wild those branches stir?
 No, no! from out the forest prance
 A trampling troop; I see them come!
 In one vast squadron they advance!

I strove to cry—my lips were dumb.
 The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
 But where are they the reins to guide?
 A thousand horse—and none to ride!
 With flowing tail, and flying mane,
 Wide nostrils—never stretch'd by pain,
 Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
 And feet that iron never shod,
 And flanks unscar'd by spur or rod.
 A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
 Like waves that follow o'er the sea,
 Came thickly thundering on,
 As if our faint approach to meet;
 The sight re-nerv'd my courser's feet,
 A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
 A moment, with a faint low neigh,
 He answer'd, and then fell;
 With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
 And reeking limbs immovable,
 His first and last career is done!
 On came the troop—they saw him stoop;
 They saw me strangely bound along
 His back with many a bloody thong:
 They stop—they start—they snuff the air,
 Gallop a moment here and there,
 Approach, retire, wheel round and round,
 Then plunging back with sudden bound,
 Headed by one black mighty steed
 Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,
 Without a single speck or hair
 Of white upon his shaggy hide;
 They snort—they foam—they neigh—swerve aside,
 And backward to the forest fly,
 By instinct, from a human eye—

They left me there, to my despair,
 Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch,
 Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
 Relieved from that unwonted weight,
 From whence I could not extricate
 Nor him nor me—and there we lay,
 The dying on the dead!
 I little deem'd another day
 Would see my houseless, helpless head,

And there from morn till twilight bound,
 I felt the heavy hours toil round,
 With just enough of life to see
 My last of auns go down on me,
 In hopeless certainty of mind,
 That makes us feel at length resign'd,
 To that which our foreboding years
 Presents the worst and last of fears
 Inevitable—even a boon,
 Nor more unkind for coming soon;
 Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
 As if it only were a snare
 That prudence might escape:
 At times both wish'd for and implored,
 At times sought with self-pointed sword,
 Yet still a dark and hideous close
 To even intolerable woes,
 And welcome in no shape.

And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure;
 They who have revell'd beyond measure
 In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
 Die calm, or calmer, oft than he
 Whose heritage was misery:
 For he who hath in turn run through
 All that was beautiful and new,

Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
And, save the future, (which is view'd
Not quite as men are base or good,
But as their nerves may be endued).

With nought perhaps to grieve:—
The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
Appears, to his distemper'd eyes,
Arrived to rob him of his prize,
The tree of his new Paradise.
To-morrow would have given him all,
Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall;
To-morrow would have been the first
Of days no more deplor'd or curst,
But bright, and long, and beckoning years;
Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
Guerdon of many a painful hour;
To-morrow would have given him power
To rule, to shine, to smite, to save—
And must it dawn upon his grave?

XVIII.

The sun was sinking—still I lay
Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed,
I thought to mingle there our clay;
And my dim eyes of death had need,
No hope arose of being freed:
I cast my last looks up the sky,
And there between me and the sun
I saw the expecting raven fly,
Who scarce would wait till both should die,
Ere his repast begun;
He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,
And each time nearer than before;
I saw his wing through twilight flit,
And once so near me he alit
I could have smote, but lack'd the strength;
But the slight motion of my hand,
And feeble scratching of the sand,
The exerted throat's faint struggling noise,
Which scarcely could be call'd a voice,
Together scar'd him off at length.—
I know no more—my latest dream
Is something of a lovely star
Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,
And went and came with wandering beams,
And of the cold, dull, swimming dense
Sensation of recurring sense,
And then subsiding back to death,
And then again a little breath,
A little thrill, a short suspense,
An icy sickness curdling o'er
My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain—
A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
A sigh, and nothing more.

XIX.

I woke—Where was I?—Do I see
A human face look down on me?
And doth a roof above me close?
Do these limbs on a couch repose?
Is this a chamber where I lie?
And is it mortal yon bright eye,
That watches me with gentle glance?
I closed my own again once more,
As doubtful that the former trance
Could not as yet be o'er.
A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,
Sate watching by the cottage wall;
The sparkle of her eye I caught,
Even with my first return of thought;
For ever and anon she threw
A praying, pitying glance on me
With her black eyes so wild and free:
I gazed, and gazed, until I knew.
No vision it could be,—
But that I lived, and was released
From adding to the vulture's feast;
And when the Cossack maid beheld
My heavy eyes at length unscal'd,
She smiled—And I essay'd to speak,
But fail'd—and she approach'd, and made
With lip and finger signs that said,
I must not strive as yet to break
The silence, till my strength should be
Enough to leave my accents free;
And then her hand on mine she laid,

And smooth'd the pillow for my head,
And stole along on tiptoe tread,
And gently oped the door, and spake
In whispers—ne'er was voice so sweet!
Even music follow'd her light feet:—
But those she call'd were not awake,
And she went forth; but, ere she pass'd,
Another look on me she cast,
Another sign she made, to say,
That I had nought to fear, that all
Were near, at my command or call,
And she would not delay
Her due return:—while she was gone,
Methought I felt too much alone.

XX.

She came with mother and with sire—
What need of more?—I will not tire
With long recital of the rest,
Since I became the Cossacks' guest:
They found me senseless on the plain—
They bore me to the nearest hut—
They brought me into life again—
Me—one day o'er their realm to reign!
Thus the vain fool, who strove to glut
His rage, refining on my pain,
Sent me forth to the wilderness,
Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
To pass the desert to a throne,—
What mortal his own doom may guess?—
Let none despond, let none despair!
To-morrow the Boryathenes
May see our coursers graze at ease
Upon his Turkish bank,—and never
Had I such welcome for a river.
As I shall yield when safely there.
"Comrades, good night!"—The Hetman threw
His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him, who took his rest when'er
The hour arrived, no matter where:—
His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, he wonder'd not,—
The king had been an hour asleep.

Ode.

1.

Oh Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls
Are level with the waters, there shall be
A cry of nations, o'er thy sunken halls,
A loud lament along the weeping sea!
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
What should thy sons do?—any thing but weep!
And yet they only murmur in their sleep.
In contrast with their fathers—as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam,
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping streets?
Oh! agony—that centuries should reap
No mellow harvest! Thirteen hundred years
Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;
And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;
And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum,
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas—and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs
The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors.

And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;
 And Hope is nothing but a false delay,
 The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,
 When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,
 And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
 Of the cold staggering race which Death is winning;
 Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;
 Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,
 To him appears renewal of his breath,
 And freedom the mere numbness of his chain;—
 And then he talks of life, and how again
 He feels his spirits soaring—albeit weak,
 And of the fresher air, which he would seek;
 And as he whispers knows not that he gasps,
 That his thin finger feels not what it clasps,
 And so the film comes o'er him—and the dizzy
 Chamber swims round and round—and shadows busy,
 At which he vainly catches, flit and gleam,
 Till the last rattle chokes the strangled scream,
 And all is ice and blackness,—and the earth
 That which it was the moment ere our birth.

II.

There is no hope for nation!—Search the page
 Of many thousand years—the daily scene,
 The flow and ebb of each recurring age,
 The everlasting to be which hath been,
 Hath taught us nought or little: still we lean
 On things that rot beneath our weight, and wear
 Our strength away in wrestling with the air;
 For 'tis our nature strikes us down: the beasts
 Slaughter'd in hourly hecatombs for feasts
 Are of as high an order—they must go
 Even where their driver goads them, though to slaughter.
 Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,
 What have they given your children in return?
 A heritage of servitude and woes,
 A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows.
 What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,
 O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
 And deem this proof of loyalty the real;
 Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,
 And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?
 All that your sires have left you, all that Time
 Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,
 Spring from a different them!—Ye see and read,
 Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!
 Save the few spirits, who, despite of all,
 And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd
 By the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
 And thir'd to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,
 Gushing from Freedom's fountains—when the crowd,
 Madden'd with centuries of drought, are loud,
 And trample on each other to obtain
 The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
 Heavy and sore,—in which long yoked they plough'd
 The sand,—or if there sprung the yellow grain,
 'Twas not for them, their necks were too much bow'd
 And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain:—
 Yes! the few spirits—who, despite of deeds
 Which they abhor, confound not with the cause
 Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,
 Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, amite
 But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth
 With all her seasons to repair the blight
 With a few summers, and again put forth
 Cities and generations—fair, when free—
 For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee!

III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers
 With Freedom—godlike Triad! how ye sat!
 The league of mightiest nations, in those hours
 When Venice was an envy, might abate,
 But did not quench, her spirit—in her fate
 All were enwrap'd: the feasted monarchs knew
 And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,
 Although they humbled—with the kingly few
 The many felt, for from all days and climes
 She was the voyager's worship;—even her crimes
 Were of the softer order—born of Love,
 She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,
 But gladden'd where her harmless conquests spread;
 For these restored the Cross, that from above
 Hallow'd her sheltered banners, which incessant
 Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,

Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may thank
 The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
 Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe
 The name of Freedom to her glorious struggles;
 Yet she but shares with them a common woe,
 And call'd the "kingdom" of a conquering foe,—
 But knows what all—and, most of all, we know—
 With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

IV.

The name of Commonwealth is past and gone
 O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;
 Venice is crash'd, and Holland deigns to own
 A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;
 If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
 His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time.
 For tyranny of late is cunning grown,
 And in its own good season tramples down
 The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,
 Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
 Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
 Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
 Bequeath'd—a heritage of heart and hand,
 And proud distinction from each other land,
 Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's motion
 As if his senseless sceptre were a wand
 Full of the magic of exploded science—
 Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
 Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,
 Above the far Atlantic!—She has taught
 Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag,
 The floating fence of Albion's feeble crag,
 May strike to those whose red right hands have bought
 Rights cheaply earn'd with blood: Still, still, for ever
 Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
 That it should flow, and overflow, than creep
 Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,
 Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,
 And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
 Three paces, and then faltering:—better be
 Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,
 In their proud charnel of Thermopylae,
 Than stagnate in our marsh,—or o'er the deep
 Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
 One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
 One freeman more, America, to thee!

French Papers.

As we have still some space left, which it would be deemed fraudulent to send forth blank, notwithstanding the previous fact of a Six Shilling Pamphlet being given whole for one sixth of its London Price, we shall fill it with two short articles from the French Papers of the 12th of July, still the latest from that quarter, in the Settlement.

Madame Blanchard.—The following details of the melancholy catastrophe which occurred to this Lady, the heads of which we have before given, are from the Paris Paper *Le Pilote*, in an article dated Paris, July 12, 1819:—

'Yesterday evening, (Sunday, July 11,) in mounting her skiff attached to the balloon, Madame Blanchard, usually so intrepid, evinced a degree of inquietude which resembled fear; she appeared to apprehend an approaching danger, and said to a person standing near her, "I don't know why, but I am not composed to-day;" she ascended nevertheless into the air, quitting the earth, on which she was in five minutes afterwards precipitated, and perished.

The sad event which occasioned her death, has been attributed to various causes. In taking her flight, the balloon was several times dashed against the neighbouring trees; this accident, very common on these occasions, a little deranged the fire-works suspended to the machine, and changed the direction of some of the pieces in such a manner, that a Roman candle, for instance, instead of being pointed horizontally or obliquely, was directed upon the balloon and set fire to it. On the other hand it is supposed, that the unfortunate lady had intended to descend as speedily as possible, and that in consequence she had not closed the aperture, by which the gas is admitted, and by which it escapes. In applying the fire to the fire-works, she might possibly have also applied it to the current gas, which was escaping, and which thus surrounded the whole machine, which in less than ten seconds was consumed.

Whichever of those suppositions may be correct, it is certain, that every precaution had been taken, and that none of those who assisted in the preparations for the ascension have in the slightest degree incurred the reproach of incapacity, or even that of improvidence.

Madame Blanchard fell on the house No. 16, *Rue de Provence*, of which the roof was broken in by the weight of her fall: it is asserted, that she then still breathed, and was heard to utter shrieks of pain and fright. From the roof, she was precipitated on the pavement, and when the first assistance arrived, she no longer breathed. She was immediately carried to Tivoli. The immense crowd collected there, were witnesses of the event; the details of it are generally known. A general affliction succeeded to joy and pleasure, and the public expressed a desire, that the fireworks, which were intended to crown the fête should not be set off. A collection of 2400 francs was made in favour of the heirs of Madame Blanchard.

Madame Blanchard had accomplished her sixty-seventh ascension; she was about fifty years old, and has left neither children nor parents known. She was in easy circumstances without being rich. A will has been found in which she constitutes the daughter of the proprietor of the house in which she lived, her heir.

If the parents of Madame Blanchard are unknown, her friends are not so; many are known who deplore her loss.

General Savary.—The affair between General Savary and the Vicomte de Flotte, which occurred recently at Smyrna, having excited some attention, and being differently represented by the different parties, as we have given the relation of the story both from the English and French Papers, we may add here the private Letter of Mons. Le Vicomte de Flotte to his mother, (or so much of it as relates to the affair,) which has been published, and a Letter of La Comtesse de la Ferte, addressed to the Editor of *La Quotidienne*, in refutation, of what had been sent to the *Moniteur* by Madame de Rovigo, the ladies having taken as active a share in the defence of the parties whose cause they espoused, as the principals themselves. The first of these Letters is dated Smyrna, April 6, 1819, and the following are the extracts relating to the affair:—

‘Having given you an account of my arrival here and of the manner in which I have employed my time, I have, to day, to address you on a much more serious subject.—I should not write to you respecting it, if I did not apprehend that it might be misrepresented to you from other quarters.

You are acquainted, that Savary, formerly Minister of Police and one of the assassins of the Duc D’Angouleme, has been here some time. Chance occasionally brought us together in different societies, but I never spoke to him.

I was lately invited to make an excursion into the country, to an entertainment given by Madame La Ferte, Mother-in-law to our Ambassador, at which I could not avoid being present. Every thing both before and at dinner passed very agreeably: but afterwards Savary entered into conversation respecting several Generals, and among others Moreau: he could not speak well of any of them. He brought forward the conspiracy of Georges, which he termed altogether a political assassination.

I then said that the political view entertained by the conspirators was no other than to effect important changes, and to restore the Bourbons. The Bourbons said he! Yes, replied I, the Bourbons. Probably they availed themselves of the service of some persons known to possess different opinions, as did Moreau: but in a conspiracy in which the Marquis de Riviere, as well as other secret and avowed friends of the King, were such prominent characters, there could be no other design than to restore the legitimate Dynasty to the throne. Savary made no reply.

The conversation was continued by a young man, who alleged, that no person in France at that time, thought about the Bourbons. Few people replied I, thought of the Princes: it is of the Government we have been talking. The Bourbons were not considered, as they had been proscribed in Germany and Russia, and compelled to seek refuge in England, where they would have been also sought out, had it been possible. Every one knows that to have brought any member of that august family into France, was to have caused him to be massacred.

Madame La Ferte expressing a desire to depart, did me the honour to ask my arm: I accompanied her, and thus concluded the conversation, which as it appeared to me, could not be considered as an insult to Savary, since he no longer mixed in it after I had alluded to an event too true and too well known.

Nevertheless during my absence, Savary launched out into invectives against me before the young man, who, not wishing to speak on the subject to me, assured him, that he had no cause to take offence at any thing I had said, and made him pledge his word of honour that he would not speak about it to me. I was ignorant of what had passed, when the walk being finished I took leave.

It was necessary to take a circuit of about a league before I could reach the sea. On the shore I beheld Savary, conversing with my Captain. I was about to get into the boat, when he called to me and said,

“Mons. de Flotte, what have you to say to me? (at the same time drawing me to a greater distance from the sea shore). Have you any intention to insult me? Do you know me? Yes, (he continued) you have availed yourself of my situation to abuse me.” “I do not see (I replied) in what I have abused you—you have insulted me by speaking of the Bourbons and of * * *. It was not to you that I spoke, but if I have said any thing to give offence I am willing to explain.” (he replied) “Do you think I will fight with you?” “Why not?” said I: “You are a blackguard!” replied he, and at the same moment struck me over the head with his stick.

I was unarmed and without a stick—I addressed him in similar terms, and stooped to seize the tube of a pipe to defend myself, when he again struck me several times with such force as to wound me severely. The people on the shore beheld the transaction, and immediately sprang upon him and treated him as an assassin. It was impossible to suppose that he had any other intention, as he had refused to fight, and had drawn me to a considerable distance from the rest of the company.

You may well believe that I was almost furious—but, in spite of resistance, I was forced on board, to have my wounds dressed. My Captain, who remained on shore, informed me, that the French Consul was indignant at the conduct of my assassin, whom he had given orders to have arrested, and had obtained promises from the other Consuls, that they would not afford him any protection.

In the mean time Savary had taken refuge in the house of an Englishman, and the laws prohibited a forcible entrance into a merchant’s residence. He there both said and acted a thousand foolish things, and attempted in various ways to hush up the affair, but it had been too outrageous and public, and required an exemplary punishment. I was at first concerned to find the matter taken out of my hands, but, at length, reflecting on all that had passed, I reconciled myself to hand over to justice, a scoundrel, who only knew how to surprise and assassinate.

LE VICOMTE DE FLOTTE.

Smyrna, April 6, 1819.

The next is the Letter of La Comtesse de la Ferte, which is dated Paris, July 12, and addressed to the Editor of *La Quotidienne*, as follows:—

‘Whilst the Journals, in giving an account of the affair of the Vicomte de Flotte with General Savary, introduced my name in it, in an insignificant manner, I was unwilling to take the trouble of refuting any thing, not even the absurdity of the pretended fête that I had given at Smyrna; but now that a Letter of Madame Rovigo has been inserted in the *Moniteur* of the 27th of June, which was certainly ill-advised, and perverts the truth I trust, you will permit me through your Journal, to re-establish it and place the affair in its proper light.

First, with respect to that which is personal to myself. A stranger at Smyrna, where I went to await the arrival of the King’s ship that was to convey me to France, I knew only the Consul of my nation, at whose house I lodged, and that of Austria; General Savary did not visit either of these houses.

Having evinced some desire to see Bournabat, a town renowned for the beauty of its site, M. Souton, First Deputy of Commerce of France, came to me on the day appointed for this promenade, to request permission to add to our party some persons of his acquaintance. He went on board *La Quenchoise*, to ask the Captain, Monsieur de Flotte, with whom he was connected.

So little did the other persons, among whom was General Savary, concern me, that I did not know them, and I am at a loss to imagine what could have led me to purpose entertaining him. I am ignorant of what M. Souton said to him, to induce him to come there, and still more so, how his refusal could have been impolitic.

I could not have promised him my interest, as neither myself nor any of my connections could have any communication with him, so that it is entirely false that he was there at my request.

Thus far, as to what concerns myself, which I trust, you will have the goodness to insert in your Journal.

As for Monsieur le Vicomte de Flotte whom I have known a long time, and for whom my family and myself feel the most lively interest, I must say, and on the same invariable principle of truth, that the Letter which he has written to his mother, contains a most exact account of all that passed, notwithstanding it is in direct opposition to that of Madame Rovigo.

It will be found difficult to tarnish the spotless reputation of Monsieur le Vicomte de Flotte, known by his bravery and loyalty.

Receive, &c.

COMTESSE DE LA FERTE MEUNNEE COURBOIS.

Paris, July 12, 1819,

Printed at the Union Press, in Garstin’s Buildings, near the Bankshall and the Exchange.